News Release

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NAIT becomes an Edmonton Heart-Safe site

Edmonton, February 6, 2008 – NAIT has become the first post-secondary institution in Edmonton to become a full Heart-Safe site. The main campus is now home to six Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), which can be used to save lives in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest. The Patricia and SOUCH campuses each also have one AED.

"NAIT is very appreciative to be a part of the Heart-Safe program," says Mike Maitre, NAIT's Human Resources Manager. "Having public access to automated external defibrillators on our three main Edmonton campuses, allows us to provide a safer environment for the 86,500 customers a year we serve and our 3,100 staff."

When a sudden cardiac arrest occurs, defibrillation should be delivered as soon as possible to ensure the greatest chance of survival. AED access in public locations greatly decreases the time to early defibrillation. The Heart-Safe program places AEDs in high volume, increased risk locations while providing ongoing support to the program members.

"We respond to around 700 sudden cardiac arrests every year and the importance of immediate medical care at those calls is incredibly important," says Joe Acker, Acting Chief of EMS. "Through the Heart-Safe program, we're able to ensure there's access and awareness of AEDs throughout Edmonton, especially in areas that attract large populations such as NAIT."

A sudden cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack. The victim will be unconscious and the heart will beat abnormally or stop beating altogether. "The only treatment for cardiac arrest is an immediate electric shock to restore regular rhythm — and the sooner the better to prevent brain damage or death," says cardiologist Dr. Tomasz Hruczkowski of Capital Health's Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute. "Having immediate access to these life-saving devices is absolutely crucial."

"Sudden cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death in young athletes. They are especially at risk when involved in high stress athletic activities," says Donna Hastings, VP Health & Research, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Alberta, NWT & Nunavut. "The Heart and Stroke Foundation commends NAIT for joining the Edmonton Heart-Safe Program and being community minded by placing AEDs on

campus for the benefit of students and the public. This important initiative will save lives."

Heart-Safe is a partnership between Capital Health, Edmonton EMS and Heart and Stroke Foundation of Alberta, NWT & Nunavut. In 2007, the program doubled in size to now include 115 registered sites and 157 devices.

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About Edmonton:

This is a city alive with energy and boundless opportunity - a growing economic powerhouse where business thrives and more than a million lives enjoy the freedom to explore, experiment, experience, excel and expect the most out of every day. A place like no other, Edmonton is filled with surprises great and small and a calendar packed with artistic, sporting, theatrical and cultural celebration.

For more information on Edmonton, please visit our website at: www.edmonton.ca.

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Backgrounder

Heart-Safe Question & Answer

What is Heart-Safe?
Heart-Safe is a collaborative partnership that was launched in 2005 in an effort to reduce the number of deaths from sudden cardiac arrest in the city of Edmonton. The program was designed to encourage community organizations to purchase automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and have a dedicated number of staff trained to use the AED in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest.

How did Heart-Safe come about?
From 2000 until 2003, Edmonton was one of 24 communities from across North America that participated in the Public Access Defibrillation Trial (PAD Trial). The trial was undertaken to determine whether deployment of AEDs in public locations would increase survival following out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrests.

Why put defibrillators in these locations?
By using a coordinated approach to place AEDs in the community and providing increased access points to defibrillation, there is a greater chance for survival for Edmonton residents who suffer from a sudden cardiac arrest

How many AEDs are on NAIT campuses?
There are six AEDs on the main NAIT campus and one at each of the Patricia and SOUCH campuses.

How many staff have been trained to use the defibrillators?
Approximately 30 NAIT employees have been trained to use the AEDs.

What kind of training does staff receive before they can use the AEDs?
All staff receives training in one person and two person Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), the obstructed airway sequence and early defibrillation training. They will receive refresher training every two years.

Why is it so important to have immediate care when someone suffers from a sudden cardiac arrest?
When a sudden cardiac arrest occurs, it is recommended that defibrillation be delivered within five minutes of the onset of cardiac arrest. Every minute that passes without receiving defibrillation, the chance of survival decreases by 10 per cent.

How many sudden cardiac arrests are there in Edmonton?
Edmonton EMS responds to approximately 700 sudden cardiac arrests every year.